



Hugh Mitchell Receives The Nature Conservancy "Friend of the Land" Award

For many years, Hugh Mitchell worked to preserve the rare and beautiful Hemlock/Canadice Lakes Areas. His efforts were recognized by the Central & Western NY Nature Conservancy by the award of a plaque which reads, "In recognition of your role in permanently protecting the Hemlock/Canadice Lakes." Although the City of Rochester had done a

good job over 135 years protecting the Upland Watershed of these reservoir lakes, because of budget shortages they were anxious to sell the 7,200 acres to New York State. This transfer was accomplished in June 2010 after more than 30 years of effort to permanently protect the land.



Steve Rosenfeld (Board), Hugh Mitchell (Sierra Club), Jim Howe (Director)

Befriend The RRG Online

By Joshua Thines

The Sierra Club RRG really wants you to "like" us, so we're getting connected in new, exciting ways. For those who can't wait to see what the RRG is up to (or maybe just curious what we had for breakfast, etc.) you can now find us on Facebook and LinkedIn. It's an easy way to get connected to other Sierra Club members, and to share your thoughts and ideas on the environmental issues that are most important to you.

If you already have a Facebook account, you can simply go to <http://www.facebook.com/SierraROC>. You can also sign up and then try searching for "Rochester Sierra Club."

If Facebook just isn't your thing, we're also on LinkedIn, the professional networking site. Again, you can find us by searching for "Sierra Club Rochester".

BALLOT

Sierra Club

Rochester Regional Group

November, 2010

Officers elected last year and serving though the end of 2011 are: Bette Heger, Cenie Cafarelli, Linda Isaacson Fedele, Margie Campaigne, Robbyn McKie-Holzworth and Robert Withers.

The Nominating Committee has proposed six officers for 2011-2012. Vote for any six. Use blanks for write-in candidates. Members of the Executive Committee serve a 2-year term (2011-2012).

Please vote for any six candidates:

- Jessica Cole
- Peter Debes
- Hugh Mitchell
- Deb Muratore
- Paul Neumann
- Sara Rubin
- _____
- _____

PLEASE VOTE!

Cut out the Ballot and **mail by Dec 15th** to:
Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club
PO Box 10518
Rochester, NY 14610-0518
ATTN: Election

Ballots will be tallied at the Ex-Com Meeting
Tuesday, Jan. 4, 2011.



From the Chair: An Opportunity for Giving Thanks

By Deb Muratore

Thanks to all the environmentalists I've met throughout my life, both living and dead. Thanks to all the environmentalists I've yet to meet or will never meet. Thanks to all the environmentalists that lived before I was born who paved the way. And a special thanks to my parents for instilling in me at a young age the love of giving back to the community.

Thanks to the Rochester Regional

Group Ex-Com and Committees for all their commitment, knowledge, enthusiasm and willingness to ask the tough questions.

Thanks to the numerous Environmental Groups that I've had the pleasure of working with.

Thanks to all of the people who are working on Social and Environmental Justice issues in order to make the real world more like the world of our dreams - a truly

wonderful, sustainable world full of peace, love and understanding.

It's amazing to me how many people I've met who truly care about the planet and are using their talents and creativity to help Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.

These people have made and continue to make my life joyful and meaningful.

Autumn Leaves

By Margie Campaigne

In the next few weeks, while we are admiring the gorgeous colors of the trees in our area, we will also be dealing with the leaves that fall in our yards. Each municipality seems to have its own collection routine. Be sure to find out what it is and how it works where you live.

Leaves, and other dead plant material, are what turn into fertile soil if left to their own devices, or composted. If you don't or can't compost them in your own yard, the next best thing is

to put them out in piles for your city, town, or village to collect for composting. Many areas then allow residents to come and collect finished compost for use in their yards and gardens.

If you compost the leaves yourself, note that leaves and other plant material will decompose faster if shredded into smaller pieces. You may have a mulcher and/or bagger on your lawnmower or leaf blower. Mulching will not only help the leaves compost faster, but also you will have a smaller, more manageable pile to start with.

You can simply pile them in a corner of your backyard, make a simple enclosure out of chicken wire or fencing, etc., or use a purchased outdoor compost bin.

It makes me sad to see perfectly good leaves all gathered up in plastic bags, which are then destined for the landfill. This is such a waste of a natural resource. Topsoil is a precious commodity, and compost only enriches it. Please do consider making sure your leaves will go to their highest use - that of enriching our soil.

International Coastal Clean Up Update

By Deb Muratore

On September 25th, 481 volunteers removed 3500 lbs. of trash and debris from local shorelines at nine Monroe County parks. The Friends of Irondequoit Bay, The Sierra Club, RochesterEnvironment.com, Genesee Valley Audubon Society, The Nature Conservancy and the Center for Environmental Information were some of our local environmental groups who co-sponsored this event.

Several Sierra Club members and I were at Durand Beach. It was



so heartwarming to see so many children and adults volunteering. I was totally amazed when I saw three different varieties of mushrooms growing in the sand. It just goes to prove that life can survive

nearly anywhere, and this is the reason why we need to protect the earth.

Visit the Sierra Club Facebook page/wall tab under 2010 beach clean up to see all of our photos.

This year marked the 18th year of local participation in this global event. More extensive results and data will be available at [http://](http://www.rochestercoastalcleanup.org/)

www.rochestercoastalcleanup.org/.

Mark your calendars for next year's event 9/24/2011.

Fall Fun with the Sierra Club

Thanks to all who helped make our Festival at Tay House Lodge on Oct. 16th a success!

Peter Debes and Sara Rubin organized a scavenger hunt in the woods and told a story about how the birds learned to make nests. The kids created a nest using the materials they collected. Later, Hugh Mitchell illustrated the fascinating history of how Rochester came to have water from Canadice and Hemlock lakes. Finally, Peter gave a riveting show about "Creatures You Love to Hate" in the Amazon, with spiders, army ants, cockroaches, and snakes... all taken from his travels there. Add to that the pasta potluck dinner and everyone had a wonderful Fall evening.

If you missed this year, we hope you can bring your family and join us next year.



Peter Debes tells the children a story about birds' nests



Chas and his mother sort through nest-making materials collected during scavenger hunt

Weakening The DEC

By Hugh Mitchell

Governor Paterson has proposed to further disable the Department of Environmental Conservation by cutting an additional 209 jobs. These new staff cuts come after the State has already removed by attrition, early retirement or layoff over 800 jobs since 2008! In fact, DEC staffing is now down to 1983 levels. These losses are disproportionately more than any other state agency. The question is; why has the Administration weakened the DEC to the point where they are now unable to meet their minimum legally mandated services?

Under the cover story of "budget crisis" is it possible that years of protests by economic interests have influenced the Administration to emasculate the DEC by these radical staff cuts? We have to remember the many years corporations have squealed about the expense of what they call "en-

vironmental straight jacket" laws which are administered by DEC through permits, controls and monitoring. When DEC staffing is cut to the point they can no longer administer environmental laws we can presume corporations will profit at the expense of nature.

DEC staff that should be in the field conducting monitoring and providing actual environmental protection are now chained to their desks by paper work. Staff shortages have led to 95% of the Clean Air permits being rubber stamped for renewal with no actual monitoring. 90% of all clean water SPEDES permits are rubber stamped for renewal with no field surveys. According to my sources when clean water spills take place the DEC must triage which they will attend to since there is inadequate staff to actually process all claims. When the DEC, after many years finally came up with a new list of wetland areas they did

Surviving Peak Oil and Liking It

By Mike Rudnick

For decades, selected experts have warned that world oil production will eventually peak and then inexorably decline. It appears that time may be now. Learn about and discuss fossil fuels, how they touch and shape our lives, and how we can transition to reduced dependence as they become ever more costly. We'll discuss the connection between cheap fossil fuels, environmental degradation, climate change and a robust economy.

These discussions will take place the **third Monday of every month beginning January 2011 at the Pittsford Library Fisher Room, 6:30-8:30 PM.** The January meeting is organizational and introductory. Please contact the Pittsford Library or visit the library's website for the exact date in case there is a change in schedule.

not have the funds to hold hearings.

The fact the New York State government has chosen to shove aside environmental protection by sapping the strength of DEC speaks broadly to values issues. When corporations are allowed to pollute the air and water by turning the clock back 27 years through DEC job cuts, it seems clear that powerful business lobbies are getting heard.

The answer is citizen action for public welfare, which in this case involves the well being of the environment of the state. We need to write our Assembly people and Senators. This election season is a particularly important time. Ask candidates where they stand on adequate funding for the Department of Environmental Conservation. Don't take the excuse of budget shortfall for an answer when the basic environmental health of the State is at stake.

The Healing Our Waters Conference Comes To Upstate New York

By: Robbyn McKie Holzworth

The 6th Annual Healing Our Waters (HOW) Conference was held in our own Buffalo, NY this year. The event was packed with information and conversation from people involved in the protection and conservation of the Great Lakes.

There is quite a bit of excitement coming from the Buffalo and Niagara region. Mayors Brown and Dyster, both huge supporters of Great Lakes Restoration, welcomed the HOW Coalition. Julie O'Neill, the dynamic and inspiring executive director of the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper Organization, was a prominent speaker at the conference. With ambitious project proposals, the Buffalo Niagara Riverkeeper was one of the groups in New York awarded Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) funding to work on several efforts to bring a BLUE economy to the area by improving storm-water infrastructure, performing river habitat restoration, and cleaning up Areas of Concern. By focusing on having local companies perform the work, they are aiming to create opportunity for sustainable development of the local economy. By bringing life back to the area through these projects, they hope to spark community ownership and stewardship of the fabulous water access the city is so fortunate to enjoy. For more information regarding their projects, go to: <http://bn-riverkeeper.org/>

The HOW conference brought attention to many troubling issues that are facing our Great Lakes Communities:

- State and federal budget cuts have decimated the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation personnel. In addition to the need for advocacy to refund this crucial agency, there was a call to let citizens know that they should relay to officials

directly their knowledge of any possible illegal environmental activities because there will be few compliance officers in the field to monitor all of the possible trouble spots.

- Asian Carp are still a hot topic for our Great Lakes Communities. While the efforts to keep Asian Carp out of the Lakes are still underway, the permanent solution has not yet been approved or acted on.
- Climate change stresses may affect our local coastlines and ecosystems in ways we are not yet sure. David Klein, from the Nature Conservancy, spoke of ways to try to deal with the unknown: protecting key ecological coastal features, reducing human impact to shorelines, restoring coastal habitats and representing multiple native species in coastal habitats as important tools to keep our shoreline as healthy as possible as we move through the effects of climate change.

While the health and well-being of our Great Lakes was the main focus of the gathering, promoting unity among the proponents of the Great Waters of our nation was a big take away for the conference. Speakers representing Puget Sound, Coastal Louisiana, Florida's Biscayne National Park and the Gulf of Maine spoke about their great waters and encouraged us all to look at these natural resources as valuable treasures to heal and protect. Each water ecosystem is unique and yet each has much in common with the others due to toxic Areas of Concern, habitat encroachment and destruction, invasive species invasions and more. By working together to support funding for all of the nation's great waters, we are stronger legislatively, financially and share a unified message that clean water and healthy ecosystems matter from coast to coast.

Go Paperless

If you would prefer to read our newsletter online, email us at lci_msw@hotmail.com or leave a message at (585) 234-1056. Give us your email address, and we'll stop sending you hard copies of the newsletter and email you when they're available on our website. To view the electronic version of our newsletter, simply go to <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester> and select "Newsletter" from the menu bar.

Green Monroe

GreenMonroe.org is a website for Monroe County residents, businesses and organizations to identify energy saving incentive programs. These are programs offering money to help you with energy saving upgrades - in homes and in commercial buildings - and rebates to encourage the purchase of energy efficient products. GreenMonroe.org has interactive tools and reference materials for Monroe County residents, businesses and organizations on the topics of conserving energy, switching to renewable energy sources and reducing environmental footprint on energy uses. GreenMonroe.org also showcases energy conservation and renewable energy projects implemented by the Monroe County government and by residents, businesses and organizations in Monroe County. These projects demonstrate the benefits of adopting energy efficiency products and renewable energy sources.

For more information: <http://www.nwf.org/Wildlife/What-We-Do/Waters/Great-Waters-Restoration/Great-Waters-Coalition.aspx>

Next year's HOW Conference will be held in Detroit, MI.

Letters From Our Members: Let Us Know What You're Doing

If Climate Change Were Important Everyone Would Be Talking About It

By Frank Regan

Not exactly. Climate Change avoidance (or denial) is a dangerous illusion that too many people are succumbing to. There are many excuses as to why a large portion of our public still ignores or doesn't believe global warming is happening. One reason is because many have created their own positive feedback loops for denying one of the most critical issues of our day – human-caused Climate Change.

Though clearly our days are getting warmer and most scientists concur that we are presently experiencing it, millions upon millions still feel no sense of urgency or concern about a profound change occurring in our atmosphere that will probably change all our lives, but will certainly change our children's lives.

It's easy to create a positive feedback loop to climate change denial. All you have to do is avoid it and that's easy to do because corporate-backed media would just as soon push another agenda—a delusion where fossil fuels can be clean and non-polluting. Our innate desire to find happiness has been hijacked by those who want our money, our political might, and our compliance. This means we perceive that buying new gadgets, pampering our pets, watching sports, and other unimportant news is rendered important and good for our happiness because our friends, our employers, where we shop, play, and who we allow on our social networks are increasingly those who share this view of reality. That reality finds it inconvenient to take responsibility for how your actions affect our environment and convenient for those who believe that you should continue to buy more, throw out more, buy bigger vehicles that use more fossil fuels, and immerse yourself in anything but the rising temperature of our

atmosphere.

Sure, it's boring to hear this drumbeat that Climate Change is coming; it seems so passé, so dreary, so darn inconvenient. But that doesn't change the fact that more carbon dioxide is in our atmosphere (390 part per million) than is healthy for this planet (350 parts per million). No amount of avoidance, anger, irrationality drummed into your brain by loony media networks is going to change that. It's physics. Put more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere, solar rays stay green-housed in our atmosphere, and the place warms up. At some point, a tipping point occurs and Earth goes the route of Venus.

Thousands around the world tried to send a message on 10/10/10 to the world that this issue must be addressed.

"Yesterday, people at 7347 events in 188 countries got to work on the climate crisis. People joined together to dig community gardens, install solar panels, plant trees and more. We're sending a clear message to our political leaders: 'If we can get to work, so can you!'" said 350.org's website.

Here in Rochester, NY more than a hundred rallied to the cause "350 Day at the Farmers Market!". Despite only a spattering of half-hearted, local news stories about this event, citizens, shoppers, public officials, and your neighbors rallied to the cause. And even though, amidst all the other more fun events around Rochester going on at the same time, and better attended, this event has legs because it is being aggregated with other such events around the world on 350 Day. A positive feedback loop by those demanding attention to Climate Change, backed by the reality that it is happening, is occurring.

Question: Will those who have tried in vain to steal your atten-

tion from the reality of Climate Change and thus your ability to do something about it be held accountable? Like those who tried to press the Iraq War, despite all evidence to the contrary that there were no weapons of mass destruction or a link with Iraq with the 9/11 tragedy, will there be no accountability for lying us into another, far worse calamity?

Recycling Tip: Believe It or Not

By Margie Campaigne

You know how all the instructions about recycling specify "clean" containers? Do you wonder why that is? Yes, the leftover spaghetti sauce in that jar does not recycle into glass, and can turn smelly and attract bugs. These are fine reasons to want people to rinse out containers before putting them in their blue (or green) box, or before taking them to another collection facility.

I have to tell you, though, about another reason I learned about when I toured the Monroe County Recycling Facility on September 10th, with the Zero Waste Committee of our local Sierra Club. Yes, it has to do with vermin, but you might not guess which ones. It turns out the problem is with ... skunks! Those cute black "cats" with the white stripe down their backs. The smell of "unclean" containers attracts them to sneak their way into the facility at night. When the huge overhead doors open the next morning, they are startled and then spray that unmistakable smell, which fills the facility and makes a nasty environment for the workers. So people, do our county workers a BIG favor and make sure your bottles, cans, pizza boxes, and other containers are as clean as you can get them!

Invasive Species-What is all the Fuss About?

By Peter Debes

Invasive species are those organisms, native or non-native, that thrive to the detriment of other organisms and dominate entire areas or ecosystems. There are lots of possibilities for why they are so successful. Here are a few to think about: An organism may be able to extract nutrients from its environment better than others; it may actually poison or alter the environment to discourage others; it may produce vast numbers of offspring which eventually overwhelm its natural predators; it may be able to withstand a greater range of moisture or temperature than other organisms, and thus gain new advantages over other organisms through global warming; it may be moved to a place where there are no predators that eat it; and so on. Each of these by itself may be enough for an organism to start to overwhelm its competitors, or multiple conditions might combine and give rise to an invasive organism.

Often invasive species are organisms that were brought to new environments intentionally; however, invasive organisms can arise accidentally. We now know that the continents have drifted for millions of years, sometimes resulting in continental collisions after millions of years of separation. Huge mixings of species occurred with unsuccessful ones passing into extinction, many essentially losing out to the new, invasive organisms.

What is happening now, however, most scientists agree goes far beyond most past events. Humans have altered environments in radically shorter periods of time than what the earth witnessed in the millions of years before we came into the picture. With stunning swiftness, humans have introduced myriad new chemicals and toxins into environments all over the planet, transported organisms far and wide, and converted vast areas of land from their native

state to human use. These changes have fostered the proliferation of invasive organisms resulting in a decline in the overall number of species present.

So what should be done? Some would say, nothing: nothing can or should be done. But there are a variety of reasons to think action is needed.

One is aesthetic. Many people want to continue to enjoy the native species that live in their area, because they love them and want to preserve them for future generations.

Another is scientific. The native organisms together make up a complex interdependent system that undergoes change whenever a single organism increases or decreases, let alone disappears. Each organism lost can make the whole system less stable, and these instabilities can be compounded with potentially devastating ecological and biological effects.

Furthermore, such systematic changes can have huge economic costs because humans are also a part of the system and are affected by the changes. For example, such changes can have a direct harmful effect on our ability to efficiently produce food or harvest other natural resources such as wood. In the past century, introduction of invasive diseases or insects has decimated forests with some of the principal trees harvested for lumber, including the American chestnut, elm, and beech, and now ash trees.

You are an important player in this crisis and can learn how you can help in the control of invasive species. The Federation of Monroe County Environmentalists (the RRG of the Sierra Club is a member) has announced a FORUM on invasive species, *The Battle Against Invasive Species*. Speakers include Steven Daniel, naturalist and President of Nature Discoveries, who will discuss plants; Charles L. Knauf, Environ-

mental Health Project Analyst of the Monroe County Health Department, who will discuss aquatic animals; and Gregg Sargis, Program Stewardship Ecologist of the Nature Conservancy (Central and Western NY), who will discuss insects. Each speaker will show photos, provide information on a variety of invasive organisms in our area, and describe some efforts that are having success in controlling them. Save the date! Come and find out what you can do.

**Battle Against Invasive Species
Tuesday, November 16th 2010
7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Brighton Town Hall Auditorium**

Metro Justice Alternative Fair

Support your local Sierra Club at the Metro Justice Alternative Fair!

We'll be selling T-shirts, our beautiful wildlife calendars, and many other items that our newly-returned Fundraising Chair from the '90s, Paul Neumann, picked out, so stop by, check out our wares, and say hello!

When: Friday, Dec. 3rd
5-9:30pm and Sat. Dec. 4
9:30am-1:00pm

Where: First Unitarian Church,
220 Winton Rd. South

Join Our Email List!

Did you know that you can get updates on what we're up to sent right to your inbox? Join our email list and you will receive an email once a week that will inform you of upcoming Sierra Club activities, keep you up to date on local environmental issues, and give you tips on actions you can take for our local environment. To sign up, visit: <http://newyork.sierraclub.org/rochester/> and scroll to the bottom of the page. Enter your email address under "Subscribe to Rochester Regional Group" and click the "Subscribe" button.

This is the local Sierra Club's biggest fundraiser each year.

Please consider ordering the 2011 calendars for your holiday gift giving and support the work of your local Sierra Club.

Proceeds from calendars purchased at local bookstores do not benefit the Rochester Regional Group.

**Please mail all orders to:
Sierra Club, Calendar Sales
PO Box 10518
Rochester, NY 14610-0518**

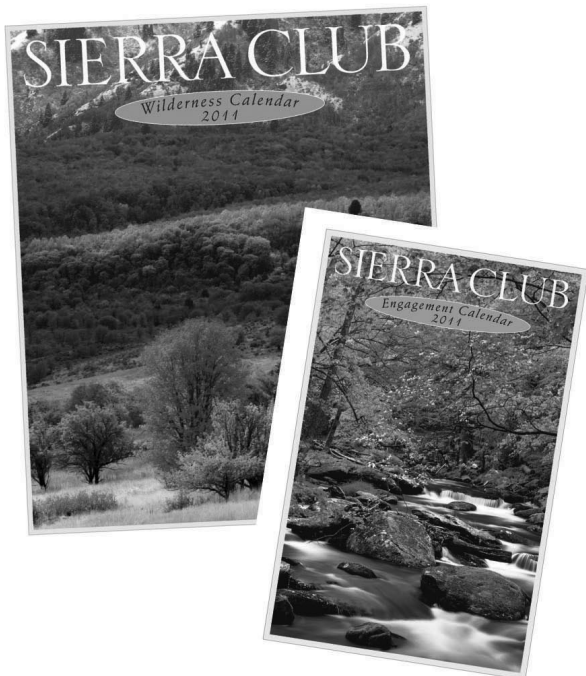
Call 585-266-5376 if you would like to order a large quantity or if you have any questions.

THANK YOU FOR SUPPORTING YOUR LOCAL SIERRA CLUB!



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Sierra Club 2011 Calendars



Order Form

Item	Cost	Quantity	Total
Engagement Calendar	<input type="checkbox"/> \$13.95	_____	_____
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		Shipping (\$3 per calendar)	_____
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Please add \$1.04 per Wilderness Calendar and \$1.12 per Engagement Calendar to your order for sales tax purposes.

April 21, 2011: Reserve this Date for the 12th Annual Sierra Club Environmental Forum

John Muir inspired people all over the world to "keep close to nature's heart." He also let us know that we had to work to keep what we love.

In this spirit, we celebrate John Muir's 173rd birthday and the 41st Anniversary of Earth Day on April 21, 2011 to bring us closer to knowing our planet and practical ways to help it thrive.

If you'd like to help our forum planning committee, please call Deb at (585) 385-9743 for more information. We'll be meeting once a month from November to April.



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Winter 2010 Calendar

All Committees are local volunteer groups of the Rochester Regional Group of the Sierra Club

Date	Day	Time	Calendar/Event	Place
Nov. 2, 2010	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
Nov. 8, 2010	Monday	7:00 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Al Sigl Center, 1000 Elmwood Ave.
Nov. 16, 2010	Tuesday	7:00 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School Library
Nov. 16, 2010	Tuesday	7:00 - 9:00 pm	Battle Against Invasive Species: FMCE Forum	Brighton Town Hall, 2300 Elmwood
Nov. 30, 2010	Tuesday	4:30 pm	Zero Waste Committee	494 East Ave
Dec. 3, 2010	Friday	5-9:30 pm	Metro Justice Alternative Fair	220 Winton Rd. South
Dec. 4, 2010	Saturday	9:30 am - 1:00 pm	Metro Justice Alternative Fair	Unitarian Universalist Church, 220 Winton Rd. South
Dec. 7, 2010	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
Dec. 13, 2010	Monday	7:00 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Al Sigl Center, 1000 Elmwood Ave.
Dec. 28, 2010	Tuesday	7:00 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School Library
Jan. 4, 2011	Tuesday	6:30 pm	Executive Committee Meeting	Harro East Bldg., Suite 600
Jan. 10, 2011	Monday	7:00 pm	Global Warming & Energy Committee Meeting	Al Sigl Center, 1000 Elmwood Ave.
Jan. 17, 2011	Monday	6:30 - 8:30 pm	Surviving Peak Oil and Liking It discussion	Pittsford Library Fisher Room
Jan. 25, 2011	Tuesday	4:30 pm	Zero Waste Committee	494 East Ave
Jan. 25, 2011	Tuesday	7:00 pm	Great Lakes Committee Meeting	12 Corners Middle School Library